ADVICE TO THE DEPUTY MINISTER
c.c. Associate Deputy Ministers

Public Opinion Research on Canadians' Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence

Date for Action: Your approval is requested by September 15, 2020, to launch the proposed Public Opinion Research plan.

SUMMARY

- We are seeking your approval of the attached Public Opinion Research (POR) plan at a cost, not to exceed $25K to support the Advisory Council on Artificial Intelligence's Public Awareness Working Group's national survey on Canadian AI literacy and perceptions.

- This planned POR fall into three 'themes' of 1) Assessing AI Literacy, 2) identification of areas of 'hope/opportunity', and 3) identification of areas of 'fear/challenges'.

BACKGROUND

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to fundamentally change society, the way we work, live, and make decisions in every aspect of our lives. Recognizing this, the Government of Canada invested $125 million in the Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy and created the Innovation Superclusters Initiative, a five hub initiative which pledged $950 million in innovation funding. With AI's broad impact and Canada's growing investment in this sector, Canada must ensure that the adoption of AI systems reflect Canadians' values.

Canada is committed to the ethical and transparent use of AI. The Canada-France Statement on Artificial Intelligence identifies fostering innovation while building trust in digital societies as one of Canada's national and international commitments. Canada has also introduced its Digital Charter, which consists of 10 principles for human-centered, inclusive data and transparency in new digital technologies, including AI.

In the December 2019 Speech from the Throne, the development and ethical use of artificial intelligence was identified as a priority. In Minister Bains' 2019 mandate letter he pledged, in collaboration with the Minister of Digital Government, to continue work on the ethical use of data

CCM BN0006273

and digital tools, like artificial intelligence, for better government. To this end, the Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council's has launched a Public Awareness Working Group help fulfill these commitments.

The Public Awareness Working Group will provide evidence-based recommendations to the Advisory Council on opportunities for sustained public awareness. The Working Group will examine avenues to boost public awareness and foster trust in AI in order to better ground the Canadian discourse in a measured understanding of the technology, its potential uses, and its associated risks.

In support of the Group's mandate, we are seeking approval to launch a national survey to capture and assess AI literacy, perceptions on AI's potential, and areas of concern. This national survey is essential to develop the baseline from which the Government of Canada can identify priority areas of focus, evaluate the impact of future public training or education initiatives, and build ongoing or longitudinal surveys.

CONSIDERATIONS

As detailed in the attached POR plan, the online survey will be conducted nationally with Canadian adults (18 years and older).

This study, which will be contracted to a supplier who will be supported by the Advisory Council Secretariat at ISED will provide insights on three main themes:

1. Assessing AI Literacy – understanding what Canadians know about the capabilities and limitations of AI;
2. Assessing Perceptions on AI's Potential, Areas of Hope and Opportunity – identifying potential and benefits Canadians see in AI ,and;
3. Identifying Areas of Concern, Fear or Challenge – identifying concerns Canadians have regarding AI.

This project will adhere to all standards, policies and processes established for the conduct of public opinion research by the Government of Canada. ISED-Communications has approved the attached Public Opinion Research (POR) study (Annex A).

This project is considered time sensitive, as it help inform public deliberations to be conducted during Autumn 2020, in time for a final report to be produced by the Working Group and presented to the broader AI Advisory Council in December 2020.

CCM BN0006273

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that you approve and sign the attached POR plan (Annex A), allowing us to conduct this research in accordance to the projected timeframe.

Francis Bilodeau
Senior Assistant Deputy Minister
Strategy and Innovation Policy Sector

Attachment

CCM BN0006273

PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH INDIVIDUAL PLAN

Public Opinion Research Project Summary

Project Title	Canadians' Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence
Project Overview and Research Objectives	From smartphone applications that can understand human speech to self-driving cars, artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the way that people interact with each other, live and work. It has the potential to help us solve some of the most difficult challenges we face, create jobs and growth across all industries, and improve the lives of all Canadians.
	The Artificial Intelligence Council's mandate is to help ensure Canadians capitalize on their leadership in AI in ways that uphold Canadian values of inclusiveness and diversity so that all Canadians can participate in and benefit from the digital economy.
	The Artificial Intelligence Council's Public Awareness Working Group is responsible for engaging Canadians in a dialogue on AI. To fulfill this mandate, they are now seeking to conduct a pan-Canadian survey to establish an understanding of
	• Canadians' AI literacy; and
	• Canadians' current views of the potential (both positive and negative) of artificial intelligence in their daily lives, health and work.
	The research will help inform the next steps of the Advisory Council's deliberations on AI and will help to direct future policy and programming related to the strategic use and development of AI in Canadian society, education, training, support for business and regulations.
Information Needs	The proposed research supports the Advisory Council's mandate – that is to advise the Government of Canada on how "best to build on Canada's AI strengths, identify opportunities to create economic growth that benefits all Canadians and ensure that AI advancements reflect Canadian values". To that end, the proposed research will address three current information needs:
	1. **Canadians' AI Literacy**: Understand what Canadians know about capabilities, limitations and use of AI, its potential, strengths and limitations; as well as concepts such as human design, machine learning, and basic digital literacy. This research will establish a baseline of Canadian's familiarity with AI and allow researchers to assess gaps in basic knowledge, inclusivity and barriers.
	2. **Canadians' Perceptions of AI's Potential, Areas of Hope and Opportunity**: Identify the areas in which Canadians see the greatest potential and benefit from AI technologies – to them personally, in their lives and work, and to society.
	3. **Canadian's Areas of Concern, Fear or Challenge**: Identify issues and areas of concern or fear Canadians may hold related to AI, including privacy, identity, security and work.
Rationale and Intended Use of Research[1]	**Rationale:**
	This research contributes to Canada's commitment to advance the goals laid out in the <u>Canada-France Statement on Artificial Intelligence</u> and in the <u>Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry's mandate letter</u> namely, of fostering innovation while building trust in digital societies and economies and promoting a human-centric approach to AI grounded in human rights, inclusion, diversity, transparency and openness, sustainability and economic growth.
	Intended use of research:
	The research will help to direct future policy interventions and programming related to the strategic use and development of AI in Canadian society, education, training, support for

business and regulation. The research will be immediately used by the Advisory Council to determine topics for further deliberation in its consultations. Findings will be shared with teams working on projects related to the Digital Charter at ISED and published at Library and Archives Canada.

Risks in gathering the information:

Low: There is a need to address the current pandemic environment in the framing of the survey (to acknowledge the impacts on health of Canadians, and the need for important work, such as this, to carry on and grow the economy and jobs); sensitivity to job loss due to the pandemic will also be addressed in framing survey questions.

Risks associated with failure to gather information:

The Government of Canada does not have the information and evidence it requires to support future policy and programing related to the use of AI in the current Canadian context. The consultations it conducts with stakeholders may not be demonstrably inclusive or representative of all Canadians.

Alternative methods:

The AI Project Working group has conducted a review of currently available evidence (secondary research), identified the specific data gaps related to Canadians' views of AI, and determined that an online survey would provide the best value for Canadians and gather the best quality representative data.

Target Audience	Canadian adults (18 years and older) across Canada. Indigenous Canadians; Rural/remote Canadians; persons with disabilities; Canadians in low income, marginalized/excluded groups in Canada.
Proposed Methodology	**Quantitative**. Data will be, collected using an online survey panel. Even though this will not be a random sample, respondents will be selected across all provinces, and significant demographics including gender, age, language, urban, rural/remote, Indigenous, disabled and marginalized Canadians, based on Statistics Canada census data, to allow for weighting. The supplier's sample design will address this requirement. This public opinion research (POR) will adhere to all government standards, procedures and processes, including the • Treasury Board _Public Opinion Research within the Government of Canada_ • Treasury Board _Directive on the Management of Communications_ • Public Services and Procurement Canada _Standards for Public Opinion Research_
Projected Timeframe	The project milestones and dates are estimated as follows for this project: • Contract in Place and Project Kickoff: September 30, 2020 • Survey questionnaire development: September 30- October 7, 2020 • Survey Fielding: October 8-19, 2020 • Toplines: October 20, 2020 • Final Draft Report: October 30,2020 • Presentation: Early November 2020 (TBD) • Publication to Library and Archives: Six months following end of field: mid-April 2021
Single or Multi-year Project	Multi-year study: Fiscal 2020-21 and Fiscal 2021-22 • Research will be launched in fall 2020-21 and concluded in early spring 2021-22 with the

	final publication of results. • Most project milestones (85% of the contract) will be met by December 2020 in this fiscal year.
Use of Internal Resources	**Contracted**. Internal resources will be used, as follows: • The SCMS Public Opinion Research & Engagement team will liaise with PCO and AI Council Public Awareness Working Group in the development and analysis of the survey. • The AI Council Public Awareness Working Group will provide access to all key personnel and coordinate with SCMS on subject matter inputs and required translations; in addition, it will integrate findings from this research to inform the AI Council's deliberations and late fall consultations.
Partnerships and Resources Involved	N/A Findings from this survey will be used to support ongoing work in the department related to the Digital Charter, including teams in strategic communications and marketing.
Maximum Budget (including taxes)	$25K inclusive of HST.

Contact Information:

Deputy Head	Simon Kennedy, Deputy Minister, ISED
Head of Communications	Dawolu Saul Director General, Digital Media and Marketing, for Vicki Eatrides, ADM Strategic Communications and Marketing Sector
Public Opinion Research Departmental Coordinator	Janis Camelon, Manager, Public Engagement and Opinion Research, ISED
Project manager	Samuel Marleau Ouellet, Director and Lead, AI Council Public Awareness Working Group, ISED

Recommended By: Approved By:

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Head of Communications   Date   Deputy Head   Date

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[1] Rationale and Intended Use of Research include a clear statement of the need for undertaking the projects against criteria developed by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. It should include information on the:
- Manner in which research is prescribed by legislative, policy, evaluation or litigation requirement
- Manner in which research supports government or departmental priorities
- Manner in which research findings will benefit Canadians
- Alternate approaches and information sources considered and reasons for their unsuitability
- Risks associated with information gathering and dissemination
- Risks associated with failure to secure information